



“ONE ILLINOIS” RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS; Seeks Implementation of a True Community System for People with Disabilities

**For Immediate Release
October 31, 2006**

**Contact: Janet Stover, Executive Director
Phone: (217) 753-1190
Email: jstover@hso.net**

Springfield, Illinois (October 31, 2006) – The Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities today advocated for improving the basic human rights for persons with disabilities wishing to live in their communities. It has been almost a decade since the Supreme Court, in its landmark *Olmstead* decision, required states to have a working plan that provides persons with disabilities options to choose to live in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

“We call on all the gubernatorial candidates to ensure that basic human rights, including making available community-based alternatives to avoid unnecessary institutionalization, are extended to persons with disabilities,” said Janet Stover, Executive Director of the Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Facilities. “After all, nearly ten years after *Olmstead*, many persons with disabilities living in our State are still waiting for the supports and services necessary for simply an opportunity to live more independently.”

According to the “*ONE ILLINOIS: A Community Initiative for Persons with Disabilities*” campaign, approximately 28,000 persons with mental illness reside in nursing homes or an institutional setting – with one in five (21%) indicating a preference to return to the community. In addition, recent Prioritization of Urgency Needs for Services (PUNS) data shows there are 1,863 people over 60 caring for a family member with a developmental disability.

“The campaign seeks the adequate leadership and funding to support a true community system that gives people with disabilities and mental illness more choices and improved service delivery,” according to Stover.

The need for basic human rights and integration comes as the Congress has enacted “self-determination” proposals, which were included in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005. Among them is the ‘Money Follows the Person Initiative’ that establishes a new competitive state grant program to transition persons with disabilities and senior citizens from institutionalized care to home or community-based services.

IARF and its members, other community agencies, our One Illinois partners, consumers, family members, boards of directors, staff, and communities across Illinois are 2.2 million voters calling immediate attention to the platform issues – at stake is not just people’s votes or politics, but rather the quality of daily life for Illinois’ residents with disabilities. Statewide, 2.2 million voters are touched by, and care about disability issues and believe that you cannot talk about education, healthcare, housing, jobs, and human rights without talking about community services for persons with disabilities.

To learn more about “*ONE ILLINOIS: A Community Initiative for Persons with Disabilities*,” please visit www.oneillinois.info or contact Janet Stover by phone at (217) 753-1190 or email at jstover@hso.net.

#####